

The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial RC School

Address: 89 Addison Road, London, W14 8BZ

Unique reference number (URN): 141931

Inspection report: 15 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Exceptional ●

Achievement

Exceptional ●

Pupils learn the curriculum remarkably well and achieve highly across a very wide range of subjects. Work seen in lessons reflects pupils' firm grasp of the curriculum, and they demonstrate real confidence in recalling and applying their learning. Attainment is consistently well above national averages. The majority of pupils secure at least Grade 5 in English and mathematics at GCSE, and there is no significant variation between subjects. As a result, pupils finish key stage 4 extremely well prepared for future learning. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make excellent progress. Attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 11 often exceeds the national average for non-disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have achieved this exceptionality through the values, ethos and the high expectations that they have established in school. Their focus on nurturing well-rounded pupils leads them to forensically removing barriers to learning and wellbeing so that pupils thrive.

Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional ●

Pupils attend school regularly because they are happy here and thrive in the caring environment. Many travel from a wide range of London boroughs, yet they show impressive commitment to their education, resulting in very high attendance and punctuality. Attendance rates have now almost returned to pre-pandemic levels. The attendance team works closely with families to ensure that all pupils receive the support they need to improve their attendance. These very high standards of attendance have been sustained over time and contribute directly to pupils' remarkable academic success.

Around the site, pupils demonstrate high levels of self-discipline, move calmly and respectfully and settle quickly into learning. Older pupils who are permitted to go off site at break and lunchtime use this freedom with maturity and responsibility. Disruption to learning is extremely rare because pupils want to learn. They approach their studies with seriousness, take pride in their work and collaborate positively with one another. Girls who join the mixed sixth form feel fully included in the life of the school and form warm, respectful relationships with the boys. Parents and carers, staff and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about how well behaviour is managed. Staff know their pupils well and create a culture where expectations are understood, upheld and valued.

Leadership and governance

Exceptional ●

Leadership at all levels is exemplary. Leaders have established a culture in which staff feel deeply valued and well supported. They are highly considerate of workload, particularly when introducing new policies. This contributes to the school's firm sense of professional trust. Leaders provide a comprehensive professional development programme, developed with a range of external partners, which equips teachers to support pupils with notable success. The programme encourages staff to refine their expertise continually, drawing on high-quality research and effective practice within and beyond the school. Early career teachers and trainees benefit from expertly designed and highly effective training. Leaders disseminate information and advice trust-wide and facilitate opportunities for staff to share

practice with other schools and organisations, extending the school's influence beyond its own community.

Leaders use detailed information about pupils' progress to inform decisions and ensure that any gaps are addressed promptly. They listen carefully to feedback from staff and pupils and act on it thoughtfully, modelling a culture of continuous improvement. The trust and governors know the school well. They meet regularly, ask challenging questions and ensure that leaders maintain high standards. They also check that safeguarding is effective and fulfil their statutory duties.

Leaders are forward-thinking and innovative. They actively pioneer new approaches to education, demonstrating a commitment to staying at the forefront of educational practice. The school works in close partnership with parents and carers and the local community. Parents are highly supportive of the school and speak with confidence about the difference leaders make.

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional 

The personal development programme is expertly designed to ensure that pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, develop morally, socially, spiritually and culturally. Pupils demonstrate perceptive, mature and precise understanding of complex contemporary issues, including financial literacy, misogyny and fundamental British values.

Pupils access an exemplary breadth of musical, sporting and cultural opportunities. Regular musical performances at prestigious national venues sit alongside an extensive programme of visits, including to the Grand Mosque in Dubai where pupils deepen their understanding of Islam. Leaders work tirelessly to secure equity of access, providing financial support and bursaries, including funding one foreign trip for every disadvantaged pupil. This approach removes barriers to opportunity and supports pupils from all backgrounds to succeed. The international programme of visits from Iceland to Dubai and Tokyo demonstrates leaders' relentless determination to broaden horizons, deepen cultural understanding and ensure that pupils thrive through sustained global experiences.

Pupils participate in a wealth of enrichment activities. Clubs such as the 'bell hooks' book club, the translation bee and the philosophy club are well attended and develop pupils' talents, interests and interpersonal skills.

Pupils flourish personally and academically, securing ambitious destinations and contributing fully to school life. A carefully considered careers curriculum prepares pupils to make informed decisions about their next steps. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, move on to sustained destinations at the end of Year 11. Students in the post-16 provision, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress to prestigious universities and other destinations that reflect their high aspirations.

Pupils are exceptionally well prepared to take their place as confident, responsible citizens in modern, diverse Britain.

Strong standard ●

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The curriculum is ambitious, broad and balanced. It is designed so that all pupils gain knowledge and skills incrementally. For example, in English, younger pupils explore how writers present masculinity through language choices. This prepares them for GCSE study, where they later examine these same ideas in Macbeth but at a more nuanced level. This approach is consistent across year groups and subjects. Pupils value the breadth of curriculum choice, including subjects such as Latin and classical Greek. Teachers have expert knowledge of the national curriculum, examination specifications and A-Level programmes, and they implement the curriculums as planned. Teaching is highly effective. Teachers focus on the most important knowledge and present information clearly. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly although in some subjects this is not as consistently as in other areas.

Leaders forensically analyse data to identify those pupils who may have gaps in literacy and numeracy. Pupils who struggle with reading or other basic skills are helped to develop their confidence and fluency. Where needed, additional support is focused and matched to pupils' specific needs. This ensures that gaps in learning are addressed effectively.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND) are quickly and accurately identified so that well-matched support is put in place. Leaders rigorously assess and monitor how pupils achieve and develop. Support is adapted and refined where needed to ensure that it has a positive impact on pupils' learning and outcomes. The school provides an extensive programme of specialist support so that pupils with SEND are rarely held back in their progress. Leaders ensure that teachers have the information they need to adapt lessons suitably. They recognise the opportunity to embed its use so that adaptations are even more precisely aligned to pupils' needs.

Leaders have effective systems in place to ensure that they enhance the learning experiences and wellbeing of pupils with SEND and those known, or previously known, to social care. Leaders are wholly committed to ensuring that every pupil has the opportunity to excel, regardless of their starting points.

Leaders are highly aspirational for disadvantaged pupils. The pupil premium strategy is impactful. Leaders ensure that any barriers pupils have to their learning and achievement are removed. Staff begin to build positive relationships with pupils and their families before they join the school to ensure effective partnership working.

The school uses alternative provision appropriately and only when it is in a pupil's best interests.

The sixth-form curriculum is ambitious and kept under regular review. Leaders offer a wide range of courses and are committed to promoting both high academic and pastoral achievement. Social mobility is a core tenet of their work. Leaders allocate resources carefully to raise aspiration and widen students' experiences, which afford them opportunities they may not otherwise access.

Teachers ensure that students move confidently through the curriculum. Teaching enables students to achieve well across the courses they study, including in national examinations and assessments. A-level attainment is above national averages. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve very well from their starting points.

Students greatly value the guidance they receive in preparing for life after the sixth form, including support with university applications. Students, particularly girls who join from other schools at the start of Year 12, are highly complimentary about their experiences here.

Students benefit from an enrichment programme that offers a diverse range of opportunities, including charity work. They study practical topics, such as finance and budgeting, to prepare them for adulthood. As a result, students are very well prepared for their next steps and a high proportion move on to their first-choice destinations.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Rooted in its motto, 'amare et servire' (to love and serve), the school places the formation of the whole child at the centre of its work. Leaders are exceedingly ambitious for every pupil and act with unwavering intent to secure the very best for them. Staff nurture pupils' interests and talents to an exceptional level, creating a community where pupils feel safe, behave with kindness and courtesy and treat one another with respect. Behaviour is exemplary and attendance is high. When concerns arise, leaders respond swiftly and effectively, ensuring that pupils feel supported and listened to.

The school lives out its mission in practical and meaningful ways that strengthen its sense of community. For example, pupils take part in weekend park runs and Gaelic football, and sixth-form students volunteer on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Parental engagement is equally impressive, with families participating in book clubs and attending events such as the school's Mozart evening.

Pupils benefit from a deeply inclusive enrichment offer that is both ambitious and life changing. They access a huge breadth of musical, sporting and cultural opportunities, from Schola performances at prestigious national venues to a wide range of activities that contribute greatly to their spiritual and cultural development. Leaders ensure that pupils from all backgrounds are able to flourish and benefit from life-enhancing opportunities. For example, the commitment to funding one foreign trip for every pupil who is disadvantaged opens doors to experiences that may otherwise be out of reach. Sixth-form students are proud to serve as subject ambassadors, supporting younger pupils both within the school

and in local primary settings, further exemplifying the school's commitment to leadership, service and community.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen the consistency with which teachers use available information to adapt learning for identified groups of pupils so that all pupils benefit from precisely matched support.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers check for understanding systematically across subjects so that highly responsive teaching consistently develops pupils' knowledge and skills.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Saint John Southworth Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paul Stubbings, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mary Benton.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, headteacher, senior leaders, other school leaders and staff at the school. Inspectors also met with trust leaders, trustees and members of the local governing board. Inspectors spoke with pupils at different times across the school day.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school makes use of 2 alternative provisions.

The school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. It is in the Diocese of Westminster. Its last section 48 inspection was in October 2024.

Headteacher: Aaron Cosgrove

Lead inspector:

Lisa Smith, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Alison Moore, Ofsted Inspector

Terry Millar, Ofsted Inspector

Eliot Wong, Ofsted Inspector

Dinesh Thuraiarasasingam, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 15 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,024

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

922

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

18.01%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

4.98%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

11.33%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	80.2%	45.4%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85.5%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	76.2%	45.3%	Above

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	67.2	46.0	Above
2023/24 (final)	67.4	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	65.2	46.3	Above

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	1.00	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.86	-0.03	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	76.9%	25.8%	Above
2023/24 (final)	65.4%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	29.4%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	58.0	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	57.0	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	46.7	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.11	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.14	-0.57	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	76.9%	53.1%	23.8 pp
2023/24 (final)	65.4%	53.1%	12.3 pp
2022/23 (final)	29.4%	52.4%	-23.0 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	58.0	50.4	7.5
2023/24 (final)	57.0	50.0	7.0
2022/23 (final)	46.7	50.3	-3.6

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	0.11	0.16	-0.06
2022/23 (final)	-0.14	0.17	-0.31

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	96%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	97%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	99%	94%	Above

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	42.70	34.99	Above
2023/24 (final)	42.67	34.38	Above
2022/23 (final)	40.63	34.16	Above

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	4.9%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.2%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.5%	9.0%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	9.5%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	10.6%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	11.1%	26.5%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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